



For Immediate Release
March 6, 2008

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**BAUCUS TO SCHWAB: TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE
MUST TOP 2008 TRADE AGENDA**

*U.S. Trade Ambassador receives clear directive on TAA, Free Trade Agreements from Finance
Chairman*

Washington, DC – Senator Baucus firmly reiterated to U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab in a hearing today that successful passage of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) legislation will take precedence in the Finance Committee over all pending free trade agreements. Chairman Baucus believes robust and renewed TAA the first step toward constructing a trade agenda that is good for our workers and good for our economy.

“I would like to know where TAA fits in your priorities. For me, and for millions of American workers, including those in my home state of Montana, it’s number one,” said Baucus. **“I will make this clear: get TAA done, and then we’ll talk.”**

Ambassador Schwab stated that TAA is “extremely high in our priorities,” and she intends to work with Baucus and the Committee on this issue.

Chairman Baucus also raised concerns about other outstanding trade issues including the enforcement of the Canadian softwood lumber agreement, and specifically a recent arbitration decision that failed to hold Canada accountable for exceeding its allowable exports. Also at issue is Korea’s continued failure to lift its ban on U.S. beef consistent with World Animal Health Organization (OIE) guidelines. Schwab responded that full enforcement of the lumber agreement is important for U.S. stability and will consider an adjustment mechanism on export taxes to address “surges” beyond allowed exports. She also mentioned that new market access for American beef is a priority for the Bush Administration.

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